

# Fiscal Note

*Fiscal Services Division*



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**SF 283** – Judicial Officers (LSB1408SV)

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Fiscal Note Version – New

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## **Description**

**Senate File 283** relates to the appointment of judicial officers and the Clerk of the District Court, the appointment and retirement of Senior Judges, and providing for a future repeal.

## **Background**

1. **House File 414** (FY 2009 Appropriations Adjustment Bill) allows the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to delay, for up to 180 days for budgetary reasons, the nominating process for any judgeship or magistrate office that becomes vacant between the effective date of the Bill and June 30, 2009.
2. Judges' salaries are set by statute Section 602.1501, Code of Iowa.
3. The 2009 compensation (including salary and benefits) for the judicial officer positions listed in this Bill are as follows:
  - Supreme Court Justice - \$190,623
  - Court of Appeals Judge - \$173,119
  - District Judge - \$161,989
  - District Associate Judge, Associate Juvenile Judge, and Associate Probate Judge - \$146,396.
4. There are currently seven Supreme Court Justices, nine Court of Appeals Judges, 116 District Court Judges, 61 District Associate Judges, and 12 Associate Juvenile and Probate Judges.
5. In FY 2009, four District Court Judges, one District Associate Judge, and one Associate Juvenile Judge retired. In FY 2008, five District Court Judges and three District Associate Judges retired.
6. This concept was originally implemented in **HF 694** (Court Practices and Procedures Act) in the 2003 Legislative Session and was repealed June 30, 2006.

## **Assumptions**

There are typically two to three openings per year for District Court Judges, District Associate Judges, or a combination thereof. Due to the size of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals, judicial retirements are rare.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The cost savings in FY 2010 to the Judicial Branch from extending the 180-day delay in filling appointments could be significant, depending on the judicial officer position that is vacant. For example, if four District Court Judges, one District Associate Judge, and one Associate Juvenile Judge positions were held open for 180 days, the savings would be approximately \$470,000.

### **Sources**

Judicial Branch

/s/ Holly M. Lyons

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The fiscal note for this bill was prepared pursuant to [Joint Rule 17](#) and the correctional and minority impact statements were prepared pursuant to [Section 2.56, Code of Iowa](#). Data used in developing this fiscal note, including correctional and minority impact information, is available from the Fiscal Services Division of the Legislative Services Agency upon request.

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